

The Little Train That Could, Really Does . . .

By CONNIE HANSEN

HEBER CITY — One year ago, the founders of the Wasatch Mountain Railway Company were saying, "We think we can, we think we can, we think we can." Today, they are saying, "We know we can, we know we can, we know we can."

Friday afternoon they proved it to everyone who might have scoffed at the feasibility of a successful scenic railway operating in Wasatch County, not to mention the State of Utah.

Good Weather

The weather cooperated as Governor Calvin L. Rampton, his wife and accompanying party boarded the colorful open air cars to join with local city and county officials, various state dignitaries and members of the news media to participate in a special run of the now renowned "Heber Creeper."

The passengers were caught up in a new awareness of the actual countryside beauty, passing through lush meadows dotted with contented grazing livestock; rounding the bends of Deer Creek Reservoir to watch a flock of seagulls take flight over the immense blue water; waving to recreation seekers and camera-toting tourists who all were waiting along the route for the passing of the steam-propelled caravan.

The spectacular view of Bridal Veil Falls seemed the only appropriate climax to the winding canyon journey.

Rampton Comments

Upon reaching the halfway point, Gov. Rampton stated that he was pleased with the progress made by the group and that no future Provo Canyon plans

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GOVERNOR CALVIN L. RAMPTON greets riders on the "Heber Creeper," as part of Governor's Day Friday. The governor said plans for the proposed canyon highway would not interfere with the railway as long as it was a financial success.

Page 2—THE HERALD, Provo, Utah Sunday, August 1, 1971



PSEUDO BANDITS attack the Heber Creeper during Friday's Governor's Day run. The bandits "kidnaped" two hostesses and

galloped off into the sage brush to the delight of the passengers. The "bandits" were just one of the attractions during the run.

'Heber Creeper' a Success

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would jeopardize the train as long as the tourist attraction is a financial success.

Passengers were treated to lunch served by attractive stewardesses dressed in bright orange and navy blue dresses, the official colors of the railway. Entertainers played guitars throughout the journey and a threatening "attack" by "Indians" was thwarted by the "good guys" in white hats who pursued the Redmen into the hills on horseback.

The return trip brought more serious problems as the train

was "held up" by a masked clan of desperados who climbed aboard and robbed the president of the railway, Lowe Ashton, of his conveniently-displayed payroll sack.

Abduct Stewardesses After abducting two stewardesses as hostages, the group rode off into the sunset, leaving the passengers none the worse for wear. Nothing had been deleted by the railway company in assuring a delightful adventure into the Old West.

The newly remodeled "Creepers" rolled into Heber City amidst the steam whistles to be

greeted by onlookers waiting to board the next run.

Statistics released by the company reveal that since the opening date of July 10, a total of 26 runs have been made which carried 2,841 paying adults and 1,374 paying children, a total of 4,215 passengers.

Full Weekends

Weekend runs have been full, necessitating the turning away of from 40 to 70 persons per run. The company is now urging all future weekend passengers to make reservations to assure themselves of a seat.

The regular service of the train operates on a weekday departure schedule of 1:30 p.m. every day except Tuesday. Weekend departures are at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$3.50 for adults and \$1.75 for children under 12, with babes in arms free.

A sidelight resulting from the rebirth of the "Heber Creeper" is the boom in business to restaurants and motels in the area. One tourist in a local grocery store said, "I have lost 250 miles this morning because I stopped down at the railroad depot to look around. I have never seen anything like it," but I'll lose another 250 miles this afternoon because I'm going back down there."

During run time, there are cars parked bearing license plates from throughout the United States. Also boosting the economy of the area is the policy of the railroad to hire about 30 teenagers throughout the county.

The trip Friday accomplished just what it set out to do — wipe away every doubt of a business or community failure. No one aboard could refute, but may envy a little, the smiles of success worn by the directors and stockholders of the "Wasatch Mountain Railway."

The Salt Lake Herald



A FRIENDLY HOSTESS greeted passengers on the Wasatch Mountain Railway's Heber Creeper Friday during Governor's Day. Gov. Calvin L. Rampton rode the train along with other guests.

According to Poll

2 Aug 1971
Herald

Majority Against 4-Lane

Canyon Road; Citizens

Group Issues Statement

A majority of Utah County residents prefer to keep the Provo Canyon highway essentially in its present location rather than construct a new four-lane highway through the canyon, according to a survey by the Utah Poll sponsored by a Salt Lake newspaper.

The survey showed that 45 percent of Utah County residents polled favored widening the existing road. Another 15 percent felt that the existing road should be left as it is. Thirty-two percent favored a new four-lane road. Six percent said they would like to see a new two-lane road built in the canyon.

The survey was conducted by the Bardsley and Haslacher Co., western research organization, under the auspices of the Salt Lake Tribune. The newspaper's announcement said the opinions of more than 600 Utah residents, age 18 and over, were obtained in the poll.

Gov. Rampton said today that he wanted to take some time to study the poll and the manner in which it was taken before he commented on the findings.

The combined total of persons wishing to leave the road alone or widen and straighten it was 60 percent. Those favoring some new road construction totalled 38 percent.

Utah County residents were, however, less opposed to a new road than people in Salt Lake and other counties. In Salt Lake County, 27 percent favored widening the road; 27 percent thought it should be left as it is; 20 percent favored a new four-lane; 11 percent favored a new two-lane; and 15 percent were undecided. In all other areas polled, 27 percent favored

widening; 17 percent favored leaving the road as it is; 18 percent would support a new four-lane; nine percent thought a new two-lane would be best; and 29 percent had not made up their mind.

The totals for Utah, all areas surveyed, showed 30 percent in favor of widening the road; 21 percent for building a new four-lane highway; nine percent in favor of a new two-lane highway; 21 percent favoring leaving the road as it is; and 19 percent undecided.

In recent months, Gov. Calvin L. Rampton has said that he would not "force the road down the throats" of the people of Utah. Although elected governmental officials in Utah County generally favor the road, and have urged the state to go ahead with construction, some citizen's groups have voiced strong opposition.

The following is a statement issued by the Provo Canyon Citizen's Committee Chairman D. Allen Firrme.

"The Provo Canyon Citizens Committee was most pleased to see the results of the poll of the citizens of Utah with regard to the Provo Canyon road improvements.

"The largest group, 30 percent of those polled, were in favor of the widening and straightening of the present road. These, together with the 21 percent who wish to leave the road as is, form a majority of the people. Only 21 percent favor a four-lane freeway.

"The Utah Road Commission should cease playing 'Big Brother' and accede to the wishes of the people. They are supposed to represent the people. The people have spoken. They do not want a four-lane freeway through Provo Canyon.

"The time is now right for the Utah County and Wasatch County Commissions to form a Provo Canyon Planning Committee. This committee could work with the Utah Highway Department in the development of the road improvements in the canyon in coordination with other activities such as the Heber Creeper Railroad, the sewer line, park development, control of commercial and housing development, billboard and sign control, bicycle paths, etc.

"Utah County has a great opportunity to be an example of citizens cooperation and involvement in the development of a master plan for Provo Canyon that will preserve the beauty and recreation features of the canyon. Let us begin right now with no further delay."